Printing Stage: Relationships between performance, print, and translation in early English editions of Molière

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The publication of dramatic texts designed initially to be performed on stage requires a form of translation from one medium to another. While a play in manuscript might be subject to modification in the rehearsal stage, a printed version is intended to preserve the text in a more fixed form. Molière became involved in the Paris printing world in order to maintain authorial and commercial control of his works. Yet the printing of his works allowed them to travel beyond the bounds of Paris and France. From the early 1660s onwards many of his plays were translated quickly in England, where there was high demand for dramatic material following the closure of the theatres during the interregnum. The translators of Molière took on the role of seeing new versions of his work put through the printing press and by the early eighteenth century collected works of Molière were published in translation. Far from the translators making themselves invisible, they used publication techniques to advertise their changes. In doing so they demonstrate engagement with the French sources and encourage readers to keep in mind the plays' stage histories.

KEYWORDS: Molière, translation, print, performance, comedy, reception, English Restoration

In the address to the readers of *L'Amour Médecin* (first performed 1665, first printed 1666) Molière confirms, unsurprisingly, that the *raison d'être* of comedies is performance onstage: 'On sait bien que les comédies ne sont faites que pour être jouées'. He writes this, however, in an authorial preface to a printed edition, and allows that there is value in reading his play, so long as the theatrical genesis is sought out: 'je ne conseille de lire celle-ci qu'aux personnes qui ont des yeux pour découvrir dans la lecture tout le jeu du théâtre'.[1] This suggests that the printed play can stimulate a reader's imagination to conjure up an impression of the characters in a theatre space. Although readers are assisted by the demarcation of scenes and acts, and the stage directions printed in the publication, this requires considerable effort on the part of readers, as Molière anticipates with his choice of the verb 'découvrir'.

If the translation of a stage performance into a printed publication calls on a reader to keep in mind the original context of the play, does the same apply to a linguistic translation in which a text in one language is transformed into a text in another language? Translation Studies has been preoccupied with the question of whether or not a translator should be 'invisible'. Lawrence Venuti argues that the invisibility of a translator in 'fluent translation' is a form of

[1] Molière, *Œuvres Complètes*, 2 vols, ed. by Georges Forestier and Claude Bourqui (Paris: Gallimard, 2010), I, p. 603. Further references are given after quotations in the text in the format *OC*, volume number, Act, Scene, line number (in verse).

illusionism that deceives readers into experiencing a translated text as too familiar. Venuti argues that

> a fluent translation masquerades as true semantic equivalence when it in fact transcribes the foreign text with a partial interpretation […] reducing if not simply excluding the very difference that translation is called on to convey.[2]

The first translators of Molière tended to eschew the role of invisible translator, not always in the way they approached rendering French into English, but in the way they presented their texts in print format. This was not because they were concerned with providing a partial interpretation of the plays, but because they wanted to claim some literary merit for bringing Molière's plays to English audiences. Nevertheless, the ways in which some translators present their texts in print show engagement with the French sources as texts that were produced for performance.[3]

Why did English dramatists look to French plays for translation sources from the 1660s onwards? The answer lies in part in the turbulent political background of the mid seventeenth century. In 1642, as the Civil War broke out in England, the theatres were shut and they remained closed during the republican rule of Oliver Cromwell. With the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660, and Charles II's accession to the throne, the theatres were reopened but were in serious need of new play texts. Charles's court was quickly recognized as a Francophile court, not least because he and his French mother had spent two years of exile in France where his cousin, Louis XIV, was king. The link between the theatre world and the court had long been established, and several English dramatists such as William D'Avenant, George Etherege and William Wycherley, had been in France during the interregnum.

The first English translations of Molière appeared in 1663and by 1732 the first parallel translation of collected works was published.[4] In this period, around fifty translations and adaptations of Molière's plays were published in England.[5] Even those texts that were published before February 1673, within Molière's lifetime, were beyond the French playwright's control.[6] The question of how far their roots in French culture were acknowledged

[2]Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 21.

[3] Julie Stone Peters explores the intersection of European print culture and theatre culture in *The Theatre of the Book, 1480-1880*: *Print, Text, and Performance in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[4] A translation of *Le Cocu imaginaire* (1660) made up one act of William D'Avenant's *The Playhouse to be Let*, first performed in London in 1663. The play and its author are not mentioned explicitly, but the piece is described as a new farce from France.

[5] For an overview of the translations see David Hopkins and Stuart Gillespie, eds, *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English: Volume 3, 1660–1790* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) and Peter France, *The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). For an account of the changes in translation approach over time see 'Molière Nationalised: *Tartuffe* on the British stage from the Restoration to the present day' in *The Cambridge Companion to Molière*, ed. by David Bradby and Andrew Calder (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 177–88.

[6] For an analysis of Molière's role in the printing of his plays see Michael Call, *The Would-Be Author:Molière and the Comedy of Print* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2015).

in translation has been neglected in the overriding critical claims that the translators simply appropriated and plagiarized the French works.[7]

This article will demonstrate the ways in which the first translators of Molière used print to direct readers' attention to adaptation techniques in translation and to performance contexts in both France and England. Early modern printed versions of Molière's plays were far from faithful reproductions of source texts; their significance in the survival of the plays beyond their initial context lies in their inventive infidelities, many of which were highlighted in print form.

Prefatory Remarks

While Molière made use of the printed preface to advise readers to imagine performance or to defend the content of his controversial plays, the first translators of Molière made great use of the printed preface or epistle dedicatory to justify their choice to translate and adapt French plays rather than to write a new work, and to answer increasingly common charges of plagiarism.[8] Thomas Shadwell claims in his preface to *The Miser* (1672), inspired by Molière's *L'Avare* (1668), that it is 'not barrenness of wit or invention, that makes us borrow from the *French*, but laziness'.[9] While such comments can be viewed as comic defence-mechanisms, there are early modern prefaces that offer more insightful comments on the usefulness of print for comparing and contrasting different versions of Molière's plays in both French and English.

Matthew Medbourne produced the first translation of Molière's *Tartuffe* soon after its eventual publication in 1669. The English version, published in 1670, is entitled *Tartuffe, or, the French Puritan*. Both plays tell the story of the eponymous religious hypocrite who cunningly ingratiates himself into Orgon's household in order to get his hands on the master's worldly goods, chattels and wife. Evidently Medbourne has adapted the religious denomination of the protagonist in the translation. His reference to a *French* Puritan may be a reference to French Huguenots, but is more likely a method of veiling his attempt to recall the anti-Puritan satire of early seventeenth-century British theatre. Medbourne himself was Catholic and became embroiled in the fabricated popish plot, for which he spent the last years of his life imprisoned. Medbourne does not explain his reasons for this recontextualization in the dedication to the text. Instead, he asks readers to consider the various forms in which the play had already been seen:

> What considerable Additionals I have made thereto [to the French play], in order to its more plausible Appearance on the English Theatre, I leave to be observed by those who shall give themselves the Trouble of Comparing the several Editions of this Comedy. How successful it has prov'd in the Action,

[7] Gerard Langbaine's *Account of the English Dramatic Poets* helped to establish the prevailing idea that throughout the Restoration the French works were simply stolen and disguised; see Gerard Langbaine, *An account of the English dramatick poets* (Oxford: printed by L.L. for George West and Henry Clements, 1691). A glut of studies at the beginning of the twentieth century looked for the presence or the absence of Molière in English dramatists' contributions to English *Restoration Comedy*. These include M. Besing, *Molières Einfluss auf das englische Lustspiel bis 1700* (Borna-Lepizig: Buchdruckerei Robert Noske, 1913) and Dudley H. Miles, *The Influence of Molière on Restoration Comedy*, (New York: The Columbia University Press, 1910).

[8] See Paulina Kewes, *Authorship and Appropriation: Writing for the Stage in England, 1660–1710* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

[9] Thomas Shadwell, *The Miser, a Comedy* (London: printed for Thomas Collins and John Ford, 1672), sig. A3^{r}.

> the Advantages made by the Actors, and the Satisfaction received by so many Audiences, have sufficiently proclaim'd.[10]

It is unclear what Medbourne means by 'several Editions of this Comedy'. The first edition of Molière's *Tartuffe* was printed in March 1669 and sold so well that a second edition was published in June. A third edition did not appear until 1673, three years after the publication of Medbourne's translation. Medbourne may be referring to the different performed versions of *Tartuffe* in 1664, 1667, and 1669, but readers would not be able to compare these as the first two versions were banned before they could be printed.[11] Medbourne is to some extent profiting from the success of the play in France, and his reference to the triumph of his translation on the English stage is undoubtedly part of a marketing ploy, but it is significant that Medbourne encourages readers to consider the transformations the play has recently undergone to show that the printed edition is considered in the contexts of both performance and print history.

Other translators of Molière likewise assess the relationships between performance history, print, and translation in their prefatory material. In the dedication to *Amphitryon, or the Two Sosias* (1690) in which John Dryden translates and adapts parts of Molière's *Amphitryon* (1668) as well as Plautus's *Amphitruo* (190-185 BC), he writes in an apparently self-deprecating manner. In contrast to Medbourne, however, he decides not to invite readers to discern all the changes he has made to the source texts:

> I will not give you the trouble, of acquainting you what I have added, or alter'd in either of them, so much it may be for the worse, but only that the difference of our Stage from that of the *Roman* or the *French* did so require it. But I am afraid, for my own Interest, that the world will too easily discover that more than half of it is mine; and that the rest is a rather lame Imitation of their Excellencies, than a just Translation. 'Tis enough that the Reader know […] that I neither deserve nor require any Applause from it; if I have perform'd any thing, 'tis the Genius of my Authors that inspir'd me; and if it has pleas'd in Representation, let the Actors share the Praise amongst themselves. As for *Plautus* and *Molière* they are dangerous; and I am to weak a Gamester to put myself into their Form of Play.[12]

Dryden sees the dedication as an opportunity to speak to the readership at large, and expresses some concern that the printed form will allow the observation that he has included content of his own invention. This attitude is quite in contrast to Medbourne's seeing print as an opportunity to accentuate his translation and adaptation techniques. Yet the apparently modest references to the reasons for the popularity of the play's performance belie vocabulary choices which actually place Dryden in a prominent authorial role in the theatrical process. His assertion that he does not require any applause reads as fishing for acclamation. The idea of his having 'performed' a service draws attention to the stage success, to which he goes on to refer directly. The pun in 'Form of Play' reminds readers that Dryden *has* placed himself amongst Plautus and Molière in translating, however loosely, their work into a new hybrid form. While on the surface he positions himself outside the circles of his inspirational authors and the actors, the semantic links of his vocabulary choices show he considered himself a member of a collaborative group that has contributed to a dramatic process of adaptation.

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[10] Matthew Medbourne, *Tartuffe: or the French Puritan. A Comedy, Lately Acted at the Theatre Royal* (London: printed by H. L and R. B. for James Magnus, 1670), sig. A3^{r}. Further references given in quotations after the text.
[11] See Lori Sonderegger, 'Sources of Translation: A Discussion of Matthew Medbourne's 1670 Translation of Molière's *Tartuffe*', *Papers on Seventeenth-Century French Literature*, 27.52 (2000), 553–72.
[12] John Dryden, *Amphitryon, or, The Two Socia's* (London: printed for J. Tonson, 1690), sig. A3^{r}.

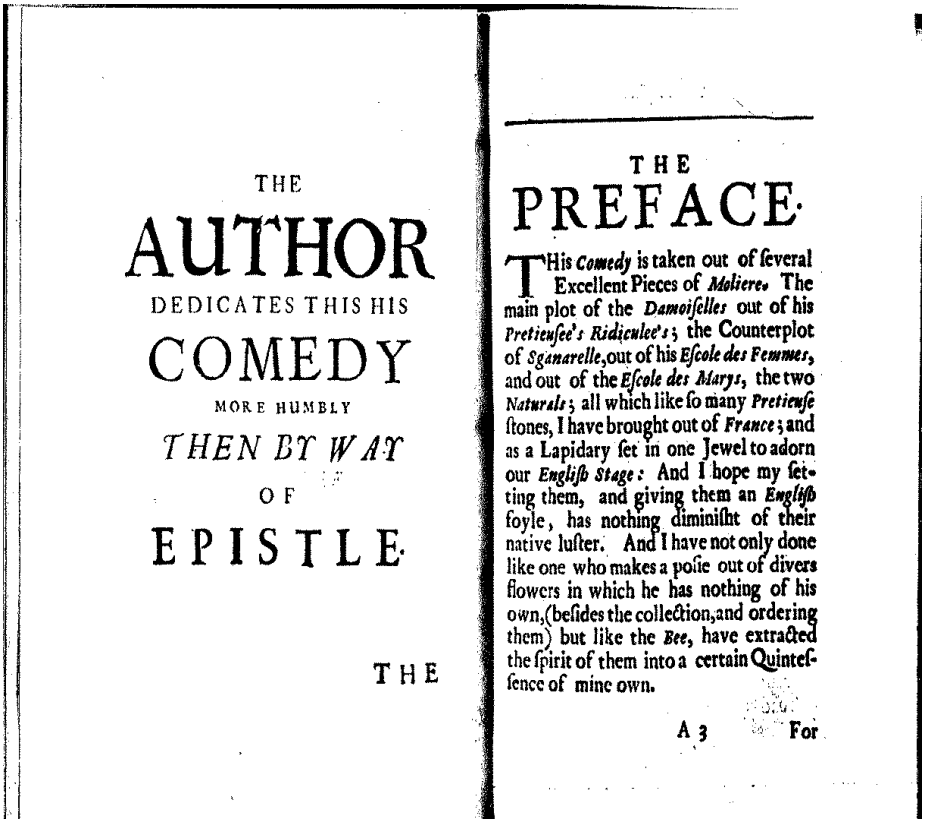
By blurring the boundaries between translation, performance and print, Medbourne and Dryden present the translator's role as a significant contribution to the transmission of drama across different temporal and geographical locations.

Typography

Plays in print form not only offered the page space to include prefatory remarks, but also typographical techniques such as bold print, capitalization, and italics. It should be asserted that techniques adopted by the first translators of Molière tend to elevate the role of the translator, but in some cases they are used to emphasize the French sources and to demonstrate engagement with the French plays.

One translator who makes use of typographical emphasis in the paratext of his play is Richard Flecknoe in *The Damoiselles à la Mode* (1667), a combination of the plots of *Les Précieuses ridicules* (1659) and *L'École des maris* (1661), with servant characters from *L'École des femmes* (1662). Readers are justified in considering all these elements somewhat unwieldy for a stage production, and in fact the play was never performed. So Flecknoe goes to great lengths in the printed version to justify his publication: 'For my Printing it before 'tis Acted, 'tis only to give the Auditors their Bill of Fare beforehand'.[13] He goes even further to include an extra prefatory page to explain that he has included a list of actors he intended to play the roles so 'that the Reader might have half the pleasure of seeing it Acted, and a lively imagination might have the pleasure of it all intire' (sig A7^{r}). The failure to get the play performed perhaps explains Flecknoe's emphasis of the French sources by means of italics in the first lines of his preface (Fig. 1), though readers of French may well be bemused by the spellings and dismayed to observe that the plot elements from *L'École des femmes* and *L'École des maris* are confused. Clearly the printing process was a hurried response to the lack of enthusiasm from the theatre.

[13] Richard Flecknoe, *The Damoiselles à la Mode* (London: printed for the author, 1667), sig A3^{v}. Further references are given after quotations in the text.



THE
AUTHOR
DEDICATES THIS HIS
COMEDY
MORE HUMBLY
THEN BY WAY
OF
EPISTLE.

THE

THE
PREFACE.

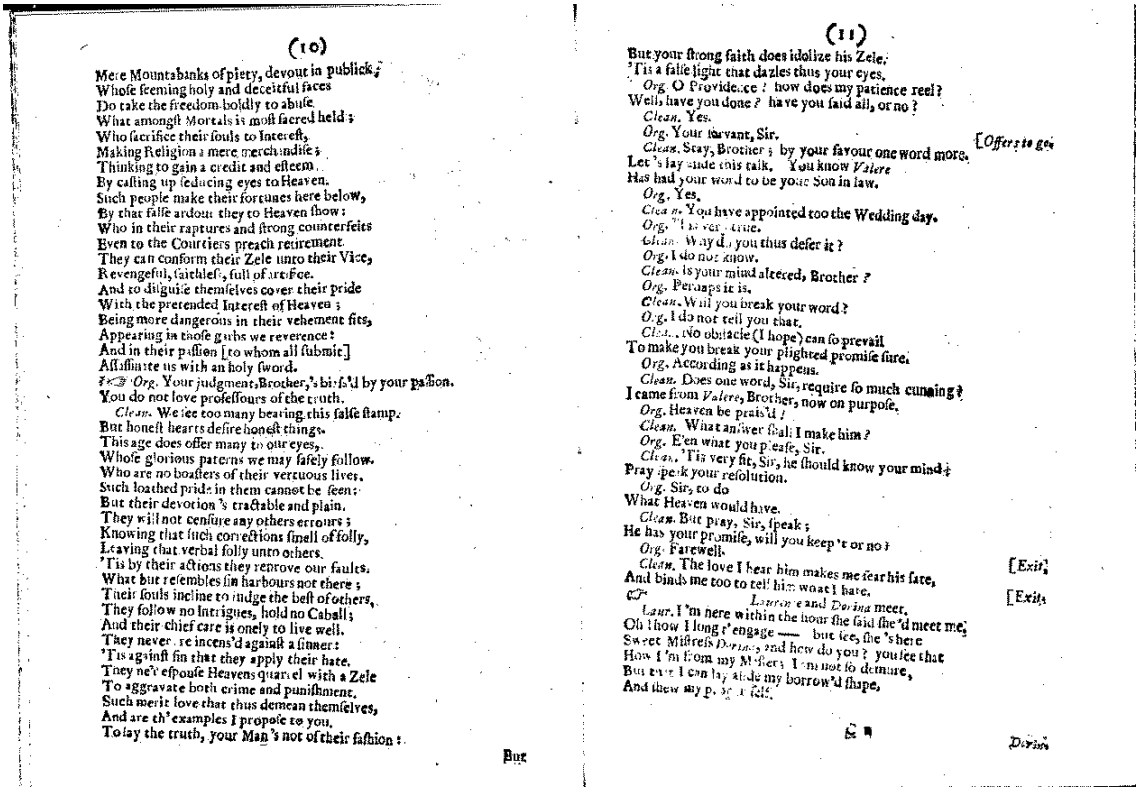
THis *Comedy* is taken out of ſeveral Excellent Pieces of *Moliere*. The main plot of the *Damoiſelles* out of his *Pretieuſee's Ridiculee's*; the Counterplot of *Sganarelle*, out of his *Eſcole des Femmes*, and out of the *Eſcole des Marys*, the two *Naturals*; all which like ſo many *Pretieuſe* ſtones, I have brought out of *France*; and as a Lapidary ſet in one Jewel to adorn our *Engliſh Stage*: And I hope my ſetting them, and giving them an *Engliſh* foyle, has nothing diminiſht of their native luſter. And I have not only done like one who makes a poſie out of divers flowers in which he has nothing of his own, (beſides the collection, and ordering them) but like the *Bee*, have extracted the ſpirit of them into a certain Quinteſſence of mine own.

A 3 For

FIGURE 1: Preface to *The Damoiselles à la Mode* (1667)

Two years later Matthew Medbourne took more care with putting his translation through the printing press and stridently capitalized on typography to emphasize his own input. He did, however, make use of typographical capitalization to emphasize the French source; Molière's name is capitalized on the title page and in the epistle dedicatory. This is in contrast to some translators, who remained curiously silent about their translation of Molière.[14] As Medbourne's preface indicates, he encouraged readers to notice his 'additionals', perhaps in order to distract from the fact that he made almost no attempt to convert the French verse into English verse. He made it easy to notice his 'additionals' by including index marks, also known as pointing hands or manicules (Fig. 2). At first glance it may seem that there is little rationale for the locations of the index marks. Why should a seemingly cursory remark from Orgon be highlighted in Cleanthes' reasoning speech in Act I Scene 5? The inclusion of some extra material at the end of the scene and act points to the easiest place in which to extend the action in a work that is mainly a line-by-line translation.

[14] One example of a translation that does not bear the French playwright's name is Edward Ravenscroft's *The Citizen Turn'd Gentleman* (1672), a hybrid of translations of *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* (1669) and *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (1670). Whether audiences and readers would be aware of the adaptation depends on whether they had seen, read, or heard about the plays in French. No previous English translations of the plays had been published.



(10)

Mere Mountebanks of piety, devout in publick;
Whose fleering holy and deceitful faces
Do take the freedom boldly to abuse
What amongst Mortals is most sacred held;
Who sacrifice their souls to Interest,
Making Religion a mere merchandise;
Thinking to gain a credit and esteem
By casting up seducing eyes to Heaven.
Such people make their fortunes here below,
By that false ardour they to Heaven show:
Who in their raptures and strong counterfeits
Even to the Courtiers preach retirement.
They can conform their Zele unto their Vice,
Revengeful, faithless, full of artifice.
And to disguise themselves cover their pride
With the pretended Interest of Heaven;
Being more dangerous in their vehement fits,
Appearing in those garbs we reverence:
And in their passion [to whom all submit]
Assassinate us with an holy sword.
☞ *Org.* Your judgment, Brother, 's biass'd by your passion.
You do not love professours of the truth.
Cleon. We see too many bearing this false stamp.
But honest hearts desire honest things.
This age does offer many to our eyes,
Whose glorious patterns we may safely follow.
Who are no boasters of their vertuous lives,
Such loathed pride in them cannot be seen:
But their devotion 's tractable and plain.
They will not censure any others errours;
Knowing that such corrections smell of folly,
Leaving that verbal folly unto others.
'Tis by their actions they reprove our faults.
What but resembles sin harbours not there;
Their souls incline to judge the best of others,
They follow no intrigues, hold no Cabals;
And their chief care is onely to live well.
They never are incens'd against a sinner:
'Tis against sin that they apply their hate.
They ne'r espouse Heavens quarrel with a Zele
To aggravate both crime and punishment.
Such merit love that thus demean themselves,
And are th' examples I propose to you.
To say the truth, your Man 's not of their fashion:

But

(11)

But your strong faith does idolize his Zele,
'Tis a false light that dazles thus your eyes.
Org. O Providence! how does my patience reel?
Well, have you done? have you said all, or no?
Cleon. Yes.
Org. Your servant, Sir. [*Offers to go.*
Cleon. Stay, Brother; by your favour one word more.
Let 's lay aside this talk. You know *Valere*
Has had your word to be your Son in law.
Org. Yes.
Cleon. You have appointed too the Wedding day.
Org. 'Tis very true.
Cleon. Why d' you thus defer it?
Org. I do not know.
Cleon. Is your mind altered, Brother?
Org. Perhaps it is.
Cleon. Will you break your word?
Org. I do not tell you that.
Cleon. No obstacle (I hope) can so prevail
To make you break your plighted promise faire.
Org. According as it happens.
Cleon. Does one word, Sir, require so much cunning?
I came from *Valere*, Brother, now on purpose.
Org. Heaven be prais'd!
Cleon. What answer shall I make him?
Org. E'en what you please, Sir.
Cleon. 'Tis very fit, Sir, he should know your mind:
Pray speak your resolution.
Org. Sir, to do
What Heaven would have.
Cleon. But pray, Sir, speak;
He has your promise, will you keep 't or no?
Org. Farewell.
Cleon. The love I bear him makes me fear his fate, [*Exit.*
And binds me too to tell him what I hate.
☞ *Lorenzo* and *Dorina* meet. [*Exit.*
Laur. I'm here within the hour she said she 'd meet me;
Oh how I long t' engage —— but see, she 's here
Sweet Mistress *Dorina*, and how do you? you see that
How I 'm from my Mother; I 'm not so demure,
But ever I can lay aside my borrow'd shape,
And shew my p. . . . fect.

&c.

Dorina

FIGURE 2: Pages of *Tartuffe, or the French Puritan,* showing the use of index marks

On close inspection, however, it emerges that the changes respond to issues of dramatic theory being discussed in the 1660s. Dryden's *Essay of Dramatick Poesie* (1660) engages with French dramatic theory discussed in Pierre Corneille's *Discours* (1660) and the abbé d'Aubignac's *Pratique du theatre* (1657). One issue that is discussed is how lengthy dramatic speeches ought to be. The character of Neander in Dryden's dialogue, who tends to present ideals of British dramatic theory, argues that long declamatory speeches in French theatre should be avoided in British theatre because 'it is unnatural for any one in a gust of passion to speak long together, or for another in the same condition to suffer him, without interruption.'[15] By extension, the audience, whose emotions should be roused by the action on stage, would also be impatient with a single character speaking at length. So Medbourne responds to this taste, rather promptly, by adding Orgon's interrupting remark within Cleanthes' *raisonneur* speech. The table in Figure 3 offers a parallel transcription of the affected lines in the 1669 French text and the English translation, showing the highlighted interruption. Medbourne shows he has considered issues of dramatic theory by pointing to Orgon's additional remark. The comic comment at the end of Cléante's speech in Molière's text shows that the sentiments of both Orgons are the same as they are being set up for a fall: 'Monsieur mon cher beau frère, avez-vous tout dit?' (*OC*, II, 1. 5. 408).

[15] John Dryden, *Prose, 1668-1691, An Essay of Dramatick Poesie and Shorter Works,* ed. by Samuel Holt Monk and A. E. Wallace Maurer, The Works of John Dryden, 17 (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1971), p. 48. Further references are given after quotations in the text.

CLEANTE Et que leur passion, dont on leur sait bon gré, Veut nous assassiner avec un fer sacré. De ce faux caractère on en voit trop paroître ; Mais les dévots de cœur sont aisés à connoître […] (*OC*, II, 1. 5. 379–82)	*Clean.* And in their passion [to whom all submit.] Assassinate us with an holy sword. ☞ *Org.* Your judgment, Brother, 's biass'd by your passion. You do not love professors of the truth. *Clean.* We see too many bearing this false stamp. But honest hearts desire honest things. […] (p. 10)

FIGURE 3: Parallel transcription of lines from Act 1 Scene 5 in Molière's *Tartuffe* (1669) and Medbourne's *Tartuffe, or the French Puritan* (1670)

Medbourne also includes manicules in the scene extensions in which he patches in dialogue between Tartuffe's servant Laurence, and the household servant Dorina. This too responds to a difference in dramatic theoretical principles in seventeenth-century France and England. While drama in France was shaped by classical unities such as the unity of action, drama in Britain was characterized by the variety of many characters and subplots. In Dryden's *Essay of Dramatick Poesie* Neander makes the following assertion:

> 'Tis evident that the more the persons there are, the greater will be the variety of the Plot. If then the parts are manag'd so regularly that the beauty of the whole be kept intire, and that the variety become not a perplex'd and confus'd mass of accidents, you will find it infinitely pleasing to be led in a labyrinth of design, where you see some way before you, yet discern not the end till you arrive at it.
> (p. 49)

In Medbourne's translation the character Laurence helps audiences 'see before them' by explaining early on that his lust for Dorina will spur him on to bring down his master. In Molière's text 'Laurent' is a non-speaking part, and he is not even listed as a character in many of today's productions, because Tartuffe needs only to address an offstage Laurent. Medbourne points to the character's amplified role by using the index mark (Fig. 4). The addition of the speaking role of Laurence in the English text gives a wider range of characters greater agency in defeating Tartuffe and in making Orgon see how foolish he has been. Medbourne's expansion of the character Laurence also allows the *deus ex machina* (or rather *rex ex machina*) ending of the French play to be diluted in this English version and therefore better suits post-restoration attitudes towards the English monarchy: King Charles II does help the characters, but he is not seemingly omniscient like Molière's Louis XIV. Medbourne clearly wants readers to consider his translation as a reworking that stays in touch with the French source; he therefore highlights, by way of typography, the differences.

ORGON	Adieu	*Org.*	Farewell [Exit
CLEANTE	Pour son amour je crains une disgrâce, Et je dois l'avertir de tout ce qui se passe.	*Cléante*	The love I bear him makes me fear his fate, And binds me too to tell him what I hate. [Exit
Fin du Premier Acte		☞	*Laurence and Dorina meet.*
		Laur.	I'm here within the hour she said she'd meet me. Oh! how I long t'engage – but see, she's here Sweet Mistress *Dorina*, and how do you? you see that How I'm from my Master I am not so demure. But that I can lay aside my borrow'd shape, And shew my proper self. […]
(*OC*, II, 1. 5. 425–26)		(p. 11)	

FIGURE 4: Parallel transcription of the final lines from Act 1 Scene 5 in Molière's *Tartuffe* (1669) and Medbourne's *Tartuffe, or the French Puritan* (1670)

Medbourne was unusual amongst his seventeenth-century translating peers in so clearly emphasizing the additional changes he had made, but the early eighteenth century saw a significant shift towards presenting translation as an engagement with source texts. The following sections of this article will address the way early eighteenth-century translations of Molière sought to preserve Molière's plays in print for posterity while still aiming to keep performance contexts in sight.

'As it is/was acted'

At the turn of the eighteenth century Molière translations continued to be produced, with a rise in versions designed for leisure reading. In 1709, for example, the periodical *The Monthly Amusement* included translations of *Le Misanthrope* and *Le Malade imaginaire*. The title of John Hughes's translation *The Misantrope; or, Man-Hater* combines a seventeenth-century French spelling of *misanthrope* with an English definition of the term. Hughes also included a preface to his translation in which he acknowledges the differences between the types of translation undertaken for the stage in the previous decades, and his close translation of the French play, stating that 'the Original is follow'd as strictly as possible, which perhaps it must not have been, if intended for the Stage.'[16] It should be noted, however, that Hughes, like the other translators of his era, did not render the French verse into English verse, arguing conveniently that 'tho' Custom may have established that Effeminate Practice [Rhyme] amongst them [the French], and *Moliere* has shewn a Facility in it which is indeed Wonderful, there was no Reason why it should be follow'd in a Translation.' Hughes goes on to suggest that close translation of Molière's plays might encourage the improvement of English plays, particularly in the areas of 'Regularity and Decorum'. His personal correspondence shows that he sent the translation of *Le Misanthrope* to an Italian opera singer in order to help him learn English: je vous demande la permission de vous faire un present du *Misantrope* en Anglois, que vous pouvez lire avec l'original'.[17] The idea of a printed Molière translation as a pedagogical tool re-emerged with the appearance of the collected editions in the following decades.

[16] *Preface* to *The Misantrope, or Man-Hater* in *The Monthly Amusement*, 4 (July 1709).
[17] *The Correspondence of John Hughes, Esq.*, 2 vols (Dublin: printed for Thomas Ewing, 1773), I, Letter XI to Signor Cavaliero Nicolini, pp. 33–36.

Love's Contrivance,

OR,

Le Medecin malgre Lui.

A

COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the

THEATRE ROYAL

IN

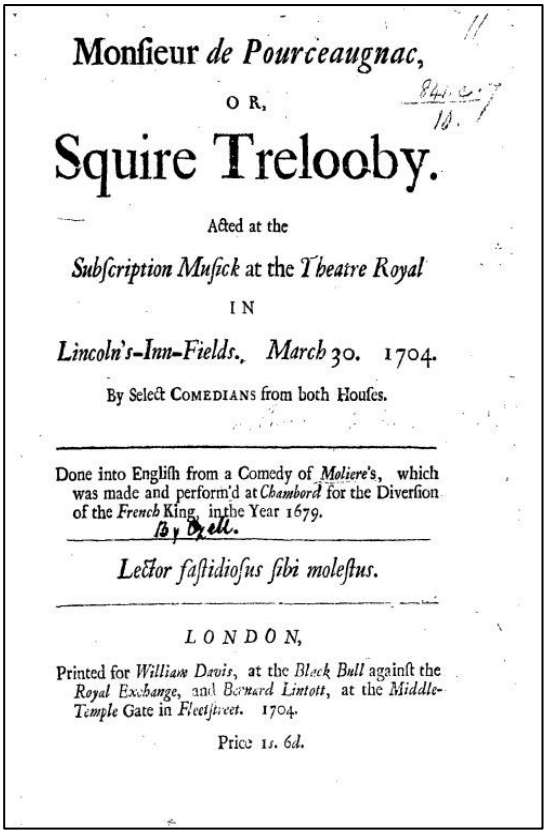
DRURY-LANE.

LONDON:

Printed for *Bernard Lintott* at the Middle-Temple Gate in *Fleetstreet.* 1703.

Price 1s. 6d.

FIGURE 5:Title Page to Susanna Centlivre's *Love's Contrivance* (1703)



Monſieur *de Pourceaugnac,*

OR,

Squire Trelooby.

Acted at the

Subſcription Muſick at the *Theatre Royal*

IN

Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. March 30. 1704.

By Select COMEDIANS from both Houſes.

Done into Engliſh from a Comedy of *Moliere's*, which was made and perform'd at *Chambord* for the Diverſion of the *French* King, in the Year 1679.

Lector faſtidioſus ſibi moleſtus.

LONDON,

Printed for *William Davis*, at the *Black Bull* againſt the *Royal Exchange*, and *Bernard Lintott*, at the *Middle-Temple* Gate in *Fleetſtreet*. 1704.

Price 1s. 6d.

FIGURE 6: Title Page to *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac,* trans. Anon. (1704)

The new vein of Molière translation as learning tool did not replace printed versions born out of staged productions, and some translators who worked only towards print publication aimed to refer to stage histories. The title page of Susanna Centlivre's translation of *Le Médecin malgré lui* offers the French title as a subtitle (Fig. 5), thereby suggesting in some sense that the English and French versions were performed simultaneously at the Theatre Royal in 1703. The following year an anonymous translation, believed to be by John Ozell, chose *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* as the main title of a translation subtitled *Squire Trelooby*. The history of this translation is complex.[18] A performed translation was produced by William Congreve, John Vanbrugh and William Walsh in 1704, but was not put through the printing press. This performance is, however, alluded to in the separate printed translation.

The translator of the version that *was* printed as *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac or Squire Trelooby* explains the history of the on-stage *Squire Trelooby* while also betraying his commercial shrewdness in wishing to get his translation published before the performed version could be printed:

> The Author of the following Sheets has to acquaint the Reader that they contain an entire Translation, *mutatis mutandis*, of *Mons. de Pourceaugnac*, one of *Molière's best Pieces*, and design'd for the English

[18] See John C. Hodges, 'The Authorship of Squire Trelooby', *The Review of English Studies*, 4.16 (1928), 404–13.

> Stage, had he not been prevented by a Translation of the same Play, done by other Hands, and presented at the New Play-house the *30th*. of last Month. When I was told the great Names concern'd in the exhibiting of it to so glorious an Assembly, and saw what Choice was made of the Comedians, I was so far from thinking my Time ill spent upon studying this Play, that I presently resolv'd upon the Publication of it […] I think I have justify'd the Title Page of this Play, wherein I say, acted at the Playhouse in *Lincoln's-Inn* Fields, *&c.* unless it can be shewn me that the other was anything else but a Translation, which nobody can say that ever read *Pourceaugnac* before they saw *Trelooby*.[19]

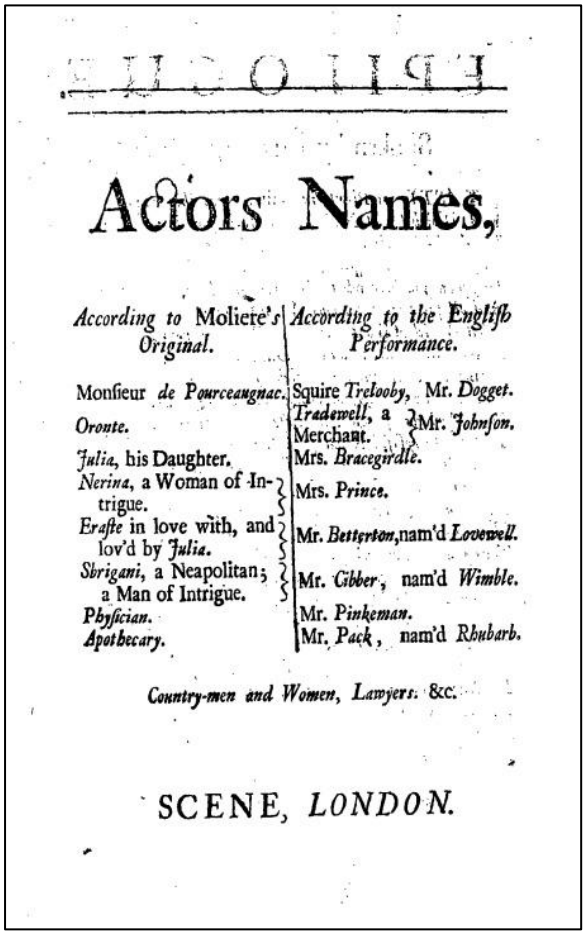
If this translation was produced by Ozell, the claim that the text was 'design'd for the English Stage' seems disingenuous given that all his other translations of Molière, collected in a 1714 edition, were geared towards publication. Nonetheless, the translator acknowledges the importance of drawing readers' attention both to the theatrical adaptability of the French play and its existence as a text to be read and compared with its translations.

The translator of the printed *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, or Squire Trelooby* complements the remarks made in the preface by including contextual information in the title page of the edition (Fig.6), which read alone might suggest that the printed version was the one performed at Lincoln's Inn Fields on 30 March 1704. It is specified that *Squire Trelooby* was performed as part of the 'Subscription Musick',[20] a series of subscription concerts, thereby forming a link between a British musical context and the comédie-ballet context of the French source. Given that the performed version does not survive in print, however, it is uncertain how strong a musical element the translated play had. Some attempt is also made to trace the history of the play back to its performance in France, in order to suggest that this translation is one in a series of different versions produced for different audiences. Unfortunately, there is an error in the title page's claim that *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* was performed at Chambord for the French King in 1679 — in fact it was performed there for the first time in 1669. The Latin motto also encourages readers not to be overly fastidious, advising that allowance should be made for freedom in translation, if not errors in provenance detail.

The reference to the fineness of the actors in the preface to *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, or Squire Trelooby* is complemented by a parallel tabular layout on the 'Actors Names' page (Fig. 7). The characters in the French source are listed alongside the anglified names apparently used in the London performed version, along with the list of actors in the English performance. The 'Scene', however, states clearly that the play has been recontextualized. The comparative presentation of character names is especially appropriate in a play in which names are a crucial element of the comedy. In the play-title *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac,* for example, Molière takes the French word for 'swine' (*pourceau*) and adds a Gascon Occitan provincial surname-ending (*-gnac*) and a prepositional particle (*de*) that indicates nobility. So the name is a mixture of comically disparate elements. Indeed, the Limousin region from which Pourceaugnac hails was and is well-known for its pig-farming, but this defining feature does not complement the dignified title of *Monsieur*. Squire Trelooby's name is inspired by the Cornish mining term *treloobing*, the act of stirring earth containing tin in a slime-pit so that the ore can settle to the bottom. The term 'looby' alone means 'a foolish person'. In the English translation, then, the French swine-based name of the protagonist becomes slime-based and suggestive of the

[19] *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, or, Squire Trelooby*, trans. anon. [John Ozell (?)] (London: printed for Bernard Lintott, 1704), $\pi 2^{r-v}$.
[20] See Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson, 'The Subscription Musick of 1703–04', *The Musical Times,* 1523.1921 (Winter 2012).

slippery slope of his attempted social climbing. The translator, capitalizing on the success of a performed version, highlights the name changes to show comic regional recontextualization as well as some sense of the previous 'lives' of the characters.



Actors Names,

According to Moliere's Original.	According to the English Performance.
Monsieur *de Pourceaugnac.*	Squire *Trelooby*, Mr. *Dogget.*
Oronte.	*Tradewell*, a Merchant. Mr. *Johnson.*
Julia, his Daughter.	Mrs. *Bracegirdle.*
Nerina, a Woman of Intrigue.	Mrs. *Prince.*
Eraste in love with, and lov'd by *Julia.*	Mr. *Betterton*, nam'd *Lovewell.*
Sbrigani, a Neapolitan; a Man of Intrigue.	Mr. *Gibber*, nam'd *Wimble.*
Phyſician.	Mr. *Pinkeman.*
Apothecary.	Mr. *Pack*, nam'd *Rhubarb.*

Country-men and Women, Lawyers. &c.

SCENE, *LONDON.*

FIGURE 7: Actors Names Page in *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, or Squire Trelooby* (1704)

Early eighteenth-century translators of Molière used the printed form to indicate how the play was acted at the time of publication and the fact that the play had been performed originally in France, and thereby suggest that the translation forms part of an ongoing process of adaptation. Far from all translators simply plagiarizing Molière without acknowledgement, many present their work as an engagement with the French drama.

Parallel Texts

One of the reasons for attributing the published edition of *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, or Squire Trelooby* to John Ozell is that the text reappeared in Ozell's *The Works of Mr de Molière* (1714). This collection of translated plays in six volumes was inspired by the first collected works of Molière published in French in 1682. *The Works* were followed in 1732 by *The Select Comedies of Mr. de Molière* printed for John Watts and including translations by the London

intellectual figures Henry Baker, James Miller, and Martin Clare.[21] This edition differed from Ozell's text insofar as it was a parallel translation printing pages taken from the 1682 text alongside the text in English. There were further ways in which the translators involved in this edition made use of printing techniques and conventions to highlight parallels between the original French context of the plays and their new contexts in translation.

The translators of *The Select Comedies* headed each translated play with a dedication to a figure in 1730s English society and in several cases sought to somehow link the theme of the play to the dedicatee. The translator *Le Médecin malgré lui* makes a particularly bold move in dedicating the translation of the medical satire to a London physician called Dr Mead. He makes sure to explain, however, that 'As 'twas perverted Medicine alone, and its quack Professors that were the Subject of his [Molière's] Ridicule' Dr Mead could not 'be displeas'd with a Satire he could not fear' and must be aware of the state of medicine in Paris in the time of Molière.[22] So the dedicator suggests that the following text and its translation can only be understood as a time-locked satire of mid-seventeenth-century medicine in France, not by extension a topical satire applicable in England. The printed form allows the translator to protect himself from charges that the play might be adapted to comment on eighteenth-century British medicine. In doing so, the translator draws attention to the social resonance that the French play had in Paris upon its first performance. The *Select Comedies* marks a shift in attitude towards translation of Molière; alongside versions produced for performance there were published texts that in some sense preserved the initial contexts of Molière's plays. This was achieved by drawing contrasting parallels between the social environment in which the French plays were performed and the social environment in which they appeared in print in 1730s London.

The translators of *The Select Comedies*, however, did not wholly dissociate their English versions of the plays from performance potential. In the dedication to the collected works as a whole they state that there is no reason why most of the translated plays could not be performed onstage in England:

> For tho' the translation of 'em, as it now stands, may be thought too literal and close for that, yet the Dramatick Writers might, with very little Pains, so model and adapt them to our Theatre and Age, as to procure 'em all the Success could be wish'd; and we may venture to affirm, that 'twould turn more to their own Account, and the Satisfaction of their Audiences, than any thing they are able to produce Themselves.[23]

[21] Henry Baker (1698-1774) finished an apprenticeship with a bookseller in London in 1720 and was engaged as a tutor. This experience led to his principal occupation as a teacher of deaf people. He sustained his literary interests by writing works on natural philosophy, and translating. In 1741 he became fellow of the Royal Society to which he left money for the annual Bakerian Lecture. James Miller (1704-1744) was a preacher in London. While at University he wrote the comedy *The Humours of Oxford* which was performed at Drury Lane in 1730. Following his involvement in the *Select Comedies of Mr. de Molière* he adapted other plays for the stage (his 1734 play *The Mother-in-law, or the Doctor the Disease* was based on *Le Malade imaginaire* and *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). Miller's involvement in the theatre led to criticism from fellow churchmen. Martin Clare (*d.* 1751) was founder of the Soho Academy, a boarding school which specialized in commerce but also had a good reputation in the arts. Clare was a freemason and became fellow of the Royal Society in 1736.

[22] Molière, *Select Comedies of Mr. de Molière, in French and English*, trans. by Henry Baker, James Miller and Martin Clare, 8 vols (London: printed for J. Watts, 1732), II, sig. A3^{v}.

[23] Molière, *Select Comedies*, trans. by Baker, Miller (and Clare), I, sig. A4^{r}.

Here the idea that English drama could be surpassed or improved by adaptations of Molière echoes the view put forward by John Hughes in the preface to the periodical translation of *Le Misanthrope* published in 1709. The potentially collaborative relationship between those involved in translation, publication, and, theatre is repeatedly discussed in eighteenth-century prefaces to translated editions.

Playwrights could also refer to translations designed for print in order to draw attention to the differences in translation methods. The same year that the *Select Comedies* were published, Henry Fielding's *The Mock Doctor*, a loose translation of *Le Médecin malgré lui*, was printed. Fielding writes in the preface that:

> One Pleasure I enjoy from the Success of this Piece, is a Prospect of transplanting successfully some others of *Moliere* of great Value. How I have done this, any *English* Reader may be satisfy'd by examining an exact literal Translation of the *Medecin malgrè* [*sic*] *Lui*, which is the Second in the Second Volume of *Select Comedies of Moliere* [*sic*], just published by *John Watts*.[24]

It ought to be noted that there is commercial interest in this comment insofar as Watts was also publishing Fielding's text. Nevertheless, it is still worth observing the way that the self-referentiality of the printing world sets up a chain of parallels between the French texts reproduced on verso pages of the *Select Comedies*, the English 'close' translations printed on the recto pages of the *Select Comedies*, and the 'transplantation' designed for success on a new stage in a new era.

Dramatic Illustrations

The *Select Comedies* printed for John Watts in 1732 included prints of engravings specially commissioned for the edition and intended to mirror the frontispieces commissioned for the 1682 posthumous French *Œuvres de Monsieur de Molière*. Engravings were reproduced from the work of famous artists from both sides of the Channel, including London's William Hogarth and Paris's Charles-Antoine Coypel.[25] Apart from making the volumes attractive to buyers and valuable to owners, the illustrations to some degree help readers to keep in mind the theatricality of the texts, rather than just treating them as pedagogical tools.[26]

Frontispieces to dramatic works, however, should be assessed with caution if being used as evidence in the study of performance practice. Michael Hawcroft notes 'five types of discontinuities' between seventeenth-century French dramatic texts and their frontispieces. He defines theses discontinuities as: 'lying about the contents of the book', 'the depiction of an on-stage event, but with an impossible configuration of characters and postures', 'when an

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[24] Henry Fielding, *The Mock Doctor: or, The Dumb Lady Cur'd. A Comedy. As it is Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury Lane, by His Majesty's Servants. With the Musick prefix'd to each Song* (London: printed for J. Watts, 1732), sig. A3^{v}. I give the title of this first edition in full because there was a 1732 pirated edition that did not include the music to the songs, the dedication, and the preface.

[25] For an analysis of the relationship between French and English theatre and art in Hogarth's lifetime see Robin Simon, *Hogarth, France, and British Art* (London: Paul Holberton Publishing, 2007).

[26] In the preface the translators offer a somewhat immodest summary of the advantages of their work from a scholarly perspective: 'The *School-Boy* will be assisted to *construe* and understand *Moliere*, seeing we have almost constantly observ'd his *Words* as well as his *Sense* […] The *Scholar* will be entertain'd to find him speak so good *English* tho' so closely translated, and marvel how the *Spirit* and the *Letter* of the *Original* could be at once so well preserv'd'. Molière, *Select Comedies*, trans. by Baker, Miller (and Clare), sigs. A11^{v}–A12^{r}.

illustration of an on-stage action depicts […] characters that do not appear on stage', 'a scene depicting an off-stage event', and 'discontinuities that are themselves textual'.[27] Yet Hawcroft does not identify these discontinuities in order to take the illustrators to task for not providing accurate representation of actions as they appeared on stage. He instead concludes positively that several seventeenth-century illustrators 'choose exciting and thematically crucial moments from the texts of the plays and they prompt readers to want to make sense of them, which can only be done by engaging in close parallel readings of text and image' (p. 95). What, then, is to be made of frontispieces commissioned anew for an edition that is itself a parallel text?

Though the translator of *Le Médecin malgré lui* in the *Select Comedies* argues in his dedication to Dr. Mead that it is seventeenth-century French medicine that is being satirized, the assertion is potentially undermined by the frontispiece that accompanies the play (Fig. 8). This engraving is based on a drawing by Bartholomew Dandridge. The costumes worn by the characters reflect an update to eighteenth-century styles, suggesting some temporal shift. There is no clear geographical shift, however, because fashions and architecture in England were influenced by French style in both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The choice of a scene in which Sganarelle wears the 'robe de médecin, avec un chapeau des plus pointus' (*OC*, I, 1. 2) provides a striking image that evokes the initial context of seventeenth-century France. This perhaps explains the choice to change the scene represented in the frontispiece for the English parallel text; in previous French collected editions the scene depicted is Act I Scene 5, an outdoor scene in which Valère and Lucas mistakenly identify Sganarelle as the doctor and enlist him, by beating him, to cure the supposedly ailing Lucinde (Fig. 9 shows the frontispiece from the French 1682 collection edition on which the *Select Comedies* is based). The French frontispiece emphasizes the play's farce and evokes the provincial theatre from which it was developed, whereas the English frontispiece emphasizes the staging of the play in a theatre through use of deep perspective, shadowing, and depiction of curtains. It is especially significant that the scene is relocated to an interior. In the frontispiece for the first edition of *Le Médecin malgré lui* in 1667 this scene is depicted outdoors, again suggestive of the provincial theatre from which it was adapted. The new frontispiece, then, suggests an eighteenth-century conception of the scene on stage which demonstrates a vision for potential contemporary performances.

Readers of the *Select Comedies* were only offered the newly commissioned frontispieces, though some were copied from the 1682 *Œuvres* (the parallel formatting did not extend to the images). Yet readers were invited to engage in parallel readings of the image, the text in French, and the text in English, and to keep in mind the ways scenes were or might be performed on stage. This process is facilitated in the *Select Comedies* by the inclusion of the act and scene in a caption (though some images conflate scenes despite being labelled as one scene). The artistic licence of the illustrator, however, should not be forgotten; in the 1732 frontispiece to *Le Médecin malgré lui* there is an image-text 'discontinuity' in the absence of Lucinde's servant Jacqueline, who has a speaking role in Act 3 Scene 6. The image is helpful

[27] Michael Hawcroft, 'Seventeenth-Century French Theatre and its Illustrations: Five Types of Discontinuity', Seventeenth-Century French Studies, 24.1 (2013), 87–105 (pp. 89, 91, 92, 94). Further references are given after quotations in the text.

in drawing attention to theatricality but not helpful as an exact representation of how a scene was acted.

The printed plays in the translated *Select Comedies*, though supposedly primarily for scholarly use, were also for spectacle insofar as the illustrations provided visual aids for recalling the stage histories and ongoing adaptation of Molière's plays for audiences beyond France.

FIGURE 8: Frontispiece to *Le Médecin malgré lui* / *A Doctor and No Doctor* in *Select Comedies* (1732)

FIGURE 9: Frontispiece to *Le Médecin malgré lui* in *Œuvres* (1682) vol. 3

Conclusion

Molière took great care to maintain control of the printing of his works and to inform readers of their performance histories through prefatory material. Beyond his sphere of influence, however, the first translators of his works by no means offered 'invisible' translations in which changes were concealed. They instead made use of the printed form to draw attention to adaptations. In most cases this was in order to justify a particular approach to translation or to claim some literary input in the production of a new text.

The translators of the seventeenth- and early eighteenth-centuries did not, however, disregard the advice that Molière gave in the preface to *L'Amour médecin*. They did recognize 'le jeu du théâtre' in their translations and sought to evoke it in the printed editions of their texts. The difference in Molière's approach to printing and the translators' approach lies in the fact that many adaptors took into account the initial stage histories of the plays in France as well as their stage histories in England, and sought to demonstrate the relationship between them.

By the end of the seventeenth century French writers started to address the issue of Molière in translation, considering the effects of placing Molière's plays in new contexts. Pierre Bayle writes about the potential for future translations of Molière's works in his *Dictionnaire historique et critique* :

> [Molière] a des beautés qui disparaîtraient dans les versions, et à l'égard des pays où le goût n'est pas semblable à celui de France; mais il en a un grand nombre d'autres qui passerait dans toutes sortes de traductions, et de quelque goût que les lecteurs fussent, pourvu qu'ils entendissent l'essence des bonnes pensées.[28]

Bayle picks up on the inevitable compromise between losses and gains in translation, but also identifies the potential for inventiveness and experimentation in his assertion that Molière's works could exist in 'toutes sortes de traductions'. He also acknowledges the importance of reading in the translation process. The first translators, as *lecteurs*, did have to work from texts and to read them with a mind not so much to extracting 'l'essence des bonnes pensées' but to taking account of the 'jeu de théâtre' conceived by Molière for all of his works. The printed text formed a crucial role in maintaining the French provenance of the plays but also kept in play the idea that reading is a gateway to visualizing past performances and envisioning future performances.

Biographical note:

Suzanne Jones is a Teaching Fellow in French at Durham University. She works on seventeenth-century French drama and its reformulations for performance and print in early modern English translation. Her first book, *The First English Translations of Molière: Drama in Flux 1663–1732* is due for publication with Legenda in April 2019. She is also interested in representations of regional characters and localized references in early modern French theatre and the ways they are repeatedly adapted for new audiences.

[28] Pierre Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, 2 vols, (Rotterdam: chez Reinier Leers, 1697), II, art. Poquelin.